

Message Text

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ACTION AF-10

INFO OCT-01 EUR-12 IO-13 ISO-00 SSO-00 NSCE-00 USIE-00
INRE-00 CIAE-00 DODE-00 PM-04 H-01 INR-07 L-03
NSAE-00 NSC-05 PA-01 PRS-01 SP-02 SS-15 DHA-02
/077 W

-----161816Z 096456 /53

O R 161611Z JUN 77
FM AMCONSUL CAPE TOWN
TO SECSTATE WASHDC IMMEDIATE 6281
USMISSION USUN NEW YORK IMMEDIATE
INFO AMEMBASSY BONN
AMEMBASSY DAR ES SALAAM
AMCONSUL DURBAN
AMCONSUL JOHANNESBURG
AMEMBASSY GABORONE
AMEMBASSY LONDON
AMEMBASSY LUSAKA
AMEMBASSY MAPUTO
AMEMBASSY OTTAWA
AMEMBASSY PARIS
AMEMBASSY PRETORIA

LIMITED OFFICIAL USE SECTION 1 OF 2 CAPE TOWN 1001

E.O. 11652: N/A
TAGS: PDEV, SF, WA
SUBJECT: NAMIBIA: ROUNDUP OF REACTION TO CAPE TOWN TALKS

REF: A) CAPE TOWN 0988, B) CAPE TOWN 0975, C) CAPE TOWN 0965,
D) CAPE TOWN 0961, E) CAPE TOWN 0944

1. SUMMARY: THOUGH THERE IS SOME DISCOMFORT AT APPEARANCES
OF WESTERN PRESSURE, MOST OBSERVERS INCLINE TOWARD BRIEF
THAT A PEACEFUL SOLUTION TO NAMIBIAN PROBLEM ACCEPTABLE
TO INTERNATIONAL COMMUNITY IS MORE LIKELY NOW THAN IT
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APPEARED PREVIOUSLY. SAG INTRODUCTION OF LEGISLATION
GIVING ALMOST UNLIMITED POWER OVER NAMIBIAN AFFAIRS
TO SAG STATE PRESIDENT HAS CAUSED SOME CONCERN, EVEN
THOUGH ACCOMPANIED BY EXPLANATIONS OF HOW POWERS ARE
TO BE USED. PRP INTRODUCED AND SAG ACCEPTED AMENDMENT
TO BILL WHICH HAS EFFECT OF AFFORDING PARLIAMENT RIGHT
TO REVIEW ACTIONS OF PRESIDENT OR ADMINISTRATOR. MANY

FEEL THAT SPECIFIC ACTIONS SAG MAY TAKE, MORE
PRECISE DEFINITION OF UN ROLE AND SWAPO'S ATTITUDE REMAIN
THE CRUCIAL ELEMENTS IN DETERMINING WHETHER OR NOT REAL PROGRESS
CAN NOW BE MADE. END SUMMARY.

2. DURING THE PERIOD FOLLOWING CONCLUSION OF THE TALKS
IN CAPE TOWN ON THE FUTURE OF NAMIBIA, MOST POLITICAL
REPORTERS FOLLOWED RATHER CAREFULLY THE INTERPRETATIONS
PUT FORWARD AT AMBASSADOR MCHENRY'S PRESS BACKGROUNDER
JUNE 10 (CAPE TOWN 0965). THEY REFLECTED A GENERALLY
OPTIMISTIC VIEW, RECOGNIZING THAT SAG HAD IN EFFECT
AGREED TO ABANDON THE TURNHALLE INTERIM GOVERNMENT
PROPOSALS IN FAVOR OF APPOINTMENT OF A RELATIVELY NEUTRAL
SOUTH AFRICAN ADMINISTRATOR GENERAL. COMMENT ON THE QUESTION
OF SUPERVISION OR OBSERVATION OF ELECTIONS, RELEASE OF
POLITICAL PRISONERS, AND EVENTUAL WITHDRAWAL OF SOUTH
AFRICAN ADMINISTRATORS AND SECURITY OR MILITARY PERSONNEL,
REFLECTED THE IDEA THAT WHILE DETAILS REMAINED TO BE
SPELLED OUT, SOME PROGRESS HAD BEEN MADE. ONLY THE
FLEUR DE VILLIERS ARTICLE APPEARING IN THE SUNDAY TIMES
JUNE 12 DREW ANY VERY SPECIFIC REACTION (CAPE TOWN 0975).
HER STATEMENT THAT SAG TROOPS WOULD BE WITHDRAWN PRIOR TO
INDEPENDENCE BROUGHT A PROMPT RESPONSE FROM FON MIN BOTHA,
POINTING OUT THAT SAG WITHDRAWAL HAD TO BE NEOGITATED WITH
THE NAMIBIAN GOVERNMENT WHICH MIGHT EVENTUALLY EMERGE, AND
THAT UNWARRANTED OR ALARMIST SPECULATION WAS UNHELPFUL IN
THE CURRENT ATMOSPHERE OF DELICATE NEGOTIATIONS.

3. SOUNDINGS BY OUR POSTS INDICATE THAT THE POSSIBILITY
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OF SERIOUS DOMESTIC DISTURBANCES IN CONNECTION WITH
THE ANNIVERSARY OF THE JUNE 16 SOWETO RIOTING WAS OCCUPYING
TOP PLACE IN MOST MINDS. THE ATTITUDE TOWARD THE CAPE
TOWN TALKS WAS PRIMARILY ONE OF WAIT AND SEE, WITH A
GENERALLY OPTIMISTIC TINGE TO SUCH OBSERVATIONS. THOSE
HOSTILE TO THE SAG POINTED OUT THAT ALL THAT HAD ACTUALLY
HAPPENED SO FAR WAS THAT THAT SAG HAD PROPOSED TO CENTRALIZE
ALL AUTHORITY IN THE PERSON OF THE STATE PRESIDENT, WITHOUT
COMMITTING ITSELF BEYOND ORAL PRESENTATIONS TO ANY SPECIFIC
COURSE OF ACTION ONCE AN ADMINISTRATOR HAD BEEN APPOINTED.
THE MAJORITY OF ARTICLES APPEARING IN NEWSPAPERS THIS WEEK
HAVE SOUNDED A POSITIVE NOTE. DIE BURGER SAID THAT WHILE
IT WOULD BE A MISTAKE TO THINK THAT NO FURTHER STUMBLING
BLOCKS WOULD ARISE, THERE WAS AT LAST LIGHT AT THE END
OF THE TUNNEL. TRANSVALER CONGRATULATED THE TURNHALLE
FOR HAVING FREED THE SAG FROM ITS OBLIGATIONS TO
IMPLEMENT THE TURNHALLE PROPOSALS, LEAVING THE ROAD OPEN
FOR INTERNATIONAL RECOGNITION OF SOUTH AFRICA AFRICA.
OGGENBLAD CALLED FOR EARLY ELECTIONS SO THAT THE WILL

OF THE PEOPLE OF SWA COULD BE CLEARLY REFLECTED, AND SWAPO'S CLAIM TO BE THE SOLE REPRESENTATIVE COULD THUS BE DEFLATED. THE ENGLISH LANGUAGE PRESS WAS EVEN MORE OPTIMISTIC, WHILE NOTING THAT THE SELECTION OF THE ADMINISTRATOR GENERAL AND THE UN REPRESENTATIVE WOULD PLAY A CRUCIAL ROLE IN DETERMINING HOW RAPIDLY DEVELOPMENTS COULD TAKE PLACE.

4. IN PARLIAMENT, PRIME MINISTER VORSTER INTRODUCED A BILL AMENDING THE 1968 SOUTH WEST AFRICA CONSTITUTION ACT IN SUCH A WAY AS TO PROVIDE OVERRIDING AUTHORITY TO THE SOUTH AFRICAN STATE PRESIDENT (CAPE TOWN 0944 AND 0988). EXTENSIVE NEWSPAPER COVERAGE WAS GIVEN TO VORSTER'S EXPLANATIONS. HE SAID THAT HE HAD PRESENTED THE DRAFT LEGISLATION TO THE REPRESENTATIVES OF THE FIVE, AND

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LIMITED OFFICIAL USE SECTION 2 OF 2 CAPE TOWN 1001

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WHILE THEY HAD NO AUTHORITY TO ACCEPT SUCH PROPOSALS ON BEHALF OF THEIR GOVERNMENTS, THEY "HAD NOT BEEN ABLE TO FIND FAULT" EITHER WITH THE LEGISLATION OR THE PROPOSAL THAT AN ADMINISTRATOR GENERAL SHOULD ADMINISTER THE TERRITORY DURING THE INTERIM PERIOD. THE AG'S ROLE WOULD BE TO LAY THE FOUNDATIONS FOR ELECTIONS AIMED AT MAKING THE TERRITORY AS A WHOLE INDEPENDENT. ANEW CONSTITUENT ASSEMBLY WOULD LIMITED OFFICIAL USE

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DRAFT A CONSTITUTION UNDER WHICH THE FINAL GOVERNMENT WOULD COME TO POWER. VORSTER NOTED THAT NEITHER THE SAG NOR TURNHALLE HAD "ANY OBJECTION TO THE APPOINTMENT OF A REPRESENTATIVE OF THE UN SECRETARY-GENERAL TO OBSERVE THE ELECTIONS" IN ORDER TO GAIN THE WIDEST POSSIBLE INTERNATIONAL ACCEPTANCE.

5. UNITED PARTY AND PROGRESSIVE REFORM PARTY SPOKESMEN INDICATED CONCERN AT THE IDEA OF TOTAL CENTRALIZATION OF POWER IN THE STATE PRESIDENT. BUT SIR DE VILLIERS GRAAF SAID THAT THIS WAS PROBABLY NECESSARY IN THE CIRCUMSTANCES, AND SUPPORTED THE BILL. PRP LEADER EGLIN CALLED IT "HUMILIATING AND GROTESQUE" AS FAR AS THE IDEA THAT PARLIAMENT WAS BEING ASKED TO ABDICATE ITS RESPONSIBILITY IN FAVOR OF THE STATE PRESIDENT. THE DEBATE LED TO VORSTER'S REJECTION OF PRP SUPPORT. "I DON'T WANT HIS (EGLIN'S) SUPPORT, AND I AM SORRY THAT HE DOES NOT DO WHAT IS IN HIS HEART, NAMELY TO WRECK THIS LEGISLATION," VORSTER SAID. HE TERMED AN ARTICLE BY POLITICAL COLUMNIST HENNIE SERFONTEIN, PUBLISHED IN THE PRP JURNAL DEURBRAKK, SAYING THAT SAG POLICY WAS DRIVING SWAPO INTO COMMUNIST ARMS, AS "TRAITOROUS." EGLIN REPLIED THAT PRP ACCEPTED NO RESPONSIBILITY FOR THE VIEWS OF AUTHORS, NOTING THAT HIS PARTICULAR ONE WAS NOT NECESSARILY FAVORABLY INCLINED TOWARD THE PRP ANYWAY.

6. TWO AMENDMENTS WERE ACCEPTED IN THE BILL, ONE OF A NON-SUBSTANTIVE NATURE, AND THE OTHER, OFFERED BY PRP MEMBER HARRY SCHWARTZ, OF SOME CONSEQUENCE. THE EFFECT OF HIS AMENDMENT IS TO PROVIDE THAT ACTIONS TAKEN BY THE STATE PRESIDENT OR HIS APPOINTED AGENT UNDER THE BROAD AUTHORITY GRANTED HIM, WOULD HAVE TO BE REVIEWED BY PARLIAMENT. WE ARE TRYING TO PIN DOWN THE PRECISE EFFECT OF THIS AMENDMENT, BUT ARE INCLINED TO BELIEVE PARLIAMENT'S ROLE WILL BE LIMITED TO DEBATE AND COMMENT. IN ANY EVENT, SAG CONTROL IN PARLIAMENT ASSURES IMPLEMENTATION OF SAG LIMITED OFFICIAL USE

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PROGRAM. THE BILL IS EXPECTED TO BE PASSED INTO LAW BEFORE
THE CLOSE OF PARLIAMENTARY BUSINESS ON FRIDAY JUNE 17.
TEXT WILL BE POUCHED ASAP.

7. TURNHALLE DELEGATES ARE SAID TO BE PERPLEXED BY THE
PROBLEM OF HOW THEY CAN MOST EFFECTIVELY ORGANIZE TO FIGHT
ANY ELECTION, ESPECIALLY IN VIEW OF VERY STRONG WHITE
RELUCTANCE TO FORM A UNITED FRONT TO MEET THE EXPECTED
SWAPO CAMPAIGN. THE MORE PESSIMISTIC LOCAL OBSERVERS THINK
SWAPO MAY REJECT WHAT HAS TRANSPIRED TO DATE AS INSUFFICIENT
TO INSURE AN IMPARTIAL PROCESS IN NAMIBIA.BOWDLER

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Message Attributes

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Control Number: n/a
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Decaption Note:
Disposition Action: RELEASED
Disposition Approved on Date:
Disposition Case Number: n/a
Disposition Comment: 25 YEAR REVIEW
Disposition Date: 22 May 2009
Disposition Event:
Disposition History: n/a
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From: CAPE TOWN
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Original Previous Classification: n/a
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